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THE CLASSICAL JOURNAL

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Editorial

ENCOURAGEMENT

The modern attack upon the classics, grown more fierce within the last few years, began when the writer was a preparatory-school student. During this period the large majority of our articles in defense have appeared in classical periodicals, a case of "carrying coals to Newcastle," as an editorial in the *Journal* well expressed it in the issue for April. Now these articles are appearing in increasing numbers in non-classical periodicals, and therefore they are reaching the audience for which they should be intended, for *we* do not need them. That is, the war is being waged in the enemy's own territory, and this is for us most encouraging. The conflict on our part has now become actively offensive, which is everywhere admitted to be the best sort of defense. This much at least we have learned since August, 1914.

In his thoughtful and charmingly expressed address of welcome at the last meeting of the Classical Association of New England, President Meiklejohn, of Amherst College, strongly urged the teachers of the classics *not* to be on the defensive.

It was a great address, especially because it was delivered by a scholar outside of our field, and it will certainly continue to have a powerful influence over the minds of all those who heard it. The Association showed during the rest of the session that it was taking to heart President Meiklejohn's advice. I am not sure, however, that its action would have been different, even if this particular address had not been delivered. The idea of assuming the offensive

You have in your keeping the great inspiration that has come down through the ages to the modern world and you should be leading in culture. You are in danger of losing the greater part of this heritage. Already for the most part you have surrendered into other hands the philosophy, the history, the art, and the literature of Greece and Rome. You are letting others take over everything but the language. If this is all you are ultimately to retain, you are not very important.

was in the air and had been for some time. The first expression of this in recent times had come from the Pacific Coast and was set forth in an editorial in the March issue of this *Journal*. Then, just as the Classical Association was meeting at Amherst, came the announcement of the great Conference on Classical Studies at Princeton. In any case, this Association has never shown itself more thoroughly *alive*. There was the usual number of excellent papers, but Mr. Forbes's arraignment of Dr. Flexner, on account of his misleading statistics in "The Modern School," was so brilliant that it was at once voted to publish the paper in pamphlet form and to distribute it as widely as possible throughout the United States. In this distribution the other Associations have done their part, especial credit for this going to the New York Latin Club, which distributed 1,000 copies within its small but important territory. An unfortunate circumstance is that we could not match the distribution of Dr. Flexner's pamphlet and send out 60,000 copies of ours. We have no richly endowed Foundation at our service! (The secretary of the Classical Association of New England still has a few copies of *The Sham Argument against Latin*, which he will be glad to send out on application.)

The campaign to secure "New Allies" was begun by all three of our Associations at their spring meetings, and this must have a mighty influence, for the Princeton conference has proved that our new allies are only waiting to be asked to take their places in the firing line. The volume to be published as a result of this conference will be a distinguished help to our cause. In this connection also should be mentioned Professor Shorey's two masterly essays on "The Assault on Humanism," which appeared in the June and July numbers of the *Atlantic Monthly*. No single contribution could be finer or have a wider effect than this. The essays are already published in a handsome volume by the Atlantic Monthly Company.

And so our objectives are really all attained. Victory may not be near, but it is perfectly sure. The only danger, and the real reason for this editorial, is that some of us, seeing what has already been accomplished, may be content to sit idly in our trenches. Instead of this, we must understand that the way to *win* is with all our forces to follow up an initial success. Between our attacks there must be the shortest possible time taken in which to bring our artillery up to the new front. There are many things for us all to do and these will occur from time to time to every wide-awake

teacher of the classics. One of these things should be to watch the columns of the newspapers and periodicals and whenever, as they often do, they publish false or misleading statements about the classics, it should be our duty to correct the fault as far as possible. In most cases it is probable that the periodicals will be fair, on being shown their errors, and will be glad to print retractions. If not, the corrections may be sent to rival publications, in which case the press will undoubtedly make the most of it!

Another thing for us to do is to continue our efforts to improve our teaching. Every fair-minded person is ready to acknowledge that the classics are taught far better than practically all other subjects. This cannot honestly be denied, for the statistics published by the College Entrance Examination Board completely establish the fact. In the Board's list for 1916 French stood first in order of excellence, with 4,602 candidates. Latin was really second, with 11,000 candidates, for botany, with only 72 candidates, hardly deserves consideration. Greek, with 1,182 candidates, was really third, since zoölogy, which the Board put in the fourth place, was taken by only 16 candidates. After Greek the other important subjects stood in the following order: German, physics, chemistry, English, mathematics, history. The statistics for 1917 are not yet available, but to the Latin readers the candidates last June seemed to be more than usually successful. Nevertheless *we* know that we have not yet reached our ideal of success. We must make our subject worth while for the students, so that they will feel themselves growing in power to accomplish things. They must realize that they are getting out of their Greek and Latin a development and culture that they could not get from any other source. If they feel this, there is no need to show that the number of students in Latin will continue to increase. To make the classics *easy* is no part of our duty. Only flabby-minded pupils wish for easy subjects, and these are not worthy of our attention. For them one might recommend a three-year course in bookkeeping and stenography as being possibly within the range of their mental powers!

M. N. W.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Most of the items in the account submitted herewith are self-explanatory. The item "Printing" covers such expenses as stationery and the printing of pamphlets and reports which are sent